



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NEWS AND NOTES

THE CLEVELAND MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

In accordance with its custom the National Council of Teachers of English held a special meeting in Cleveland during the convention of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. Sessions were held during the forenoon and afternoon of Wednesday, February 25, at the Old Stone Church. About five hundred persons attended.

The topic of the morning session was "The Permanent Speech Campaign." The first paper was read by P. Caspar Harvey, head of the English department of the Fort Hays (Kansas) State Normal School, on the subject "The Follow-up of Speech Week." Mr. Harvey had written to a large number of persons in different parts of the country asking their opinion with regard to the follow-up of the campaign and what character it should take. The answers emphasized the necessity of the inventory as a means of finding out what points most need stressing and a division of emphasis between the improvement of everyday speech and the spread of the English language among foreigners of this country. Miss Olive M. Bear, head of the English department of the Decatur (Illinois) High School, followed with a paper on "Eradicating Speech Errors," in which she laid considerable stress upon the difficulties inherent in the situation in which a high-school teacher has five or six classes and large membership in each. She would enlist the interest of the pupils in devising ways and means and in checking up on results. Professor Howard R. Driggs, professor of education in English in the University of Utah gave an inspiring address on "The Development of Speech Power." He pleaded for putting stress on content rather than on form. He would have the pupils find useful subjects and handle them with reference to the particular audience. The fundamental principle of good speaking, he said, is to have one thing to say and say it. He illustrated this principle by expanding this one thought by means of numerous illustrations drawn from his visits to schools in various parts of the country. The last speaker of the morning was Miss Zaida Gains, of the Longwood High School in Cleveland, Ohio. She gave a

highly interesting and practical demonstration of how she trains her pupils in voice production. She attempts only very simple exercises and handles these in such a way as to avoid too great self-consciousness on the part of the pupils. The psychology of suggestion is her principal resource. She believes that speech training can best be done in regular English classes by English teachers who have taken some pains to train themselves, and not by means of special courses in charge of special speech teachers.

The topic of the afternoon session was "Checking up on English." Speaking of "What to Look for in a Composition Lesson," Miss Helen O. Lemert, head of the English department of the Columbus (Ohio) High School, set forth her English creed under such heads as organizing the audience situation, the choice and limitation of the subject, orderly planning, and intelligent class criticism. She agreed with Professor Driggs that content comes first. Good work is dependent upon clear and definite motives for speaking and writing. The parallel topic, "What to Look for in a Literature Lesson," was presented by Mr. J. F. Van Every, head of the department of English and history of the Toronto (Canada) High School of Commerce. Mr. Van Every pointed out that the first necessity is really intelligent appreciation on the part of the teacher, who must be able to grasp the author's point of view and to express his message in effective oral reading. The pupils must be able to see the work as a whole as well as develop the meaning of details. Unless the literature serves to interpret life to the pupils, it has little value. He would give to a discussion and appreciation of artistic technique a distinctly subordinate place. In literature, as in composition, content comes first.

The two remaining papers of the afternoon related to the use of scales and standards. Mr. C. C. Certain, head of the English department in the Cass Technical High School, Detroit, Michigan, gave an illustrated talk on "What the Scales Show," in which he compared the standards set up by teachers with the actual standards which pupils in high school have been found able to reach. As usual, the demands of the teachers whose work was studied were far beyond the actual capacity of the pupils. By means of tables and graphs he showed how the marks attained by pupils in classes in composition compare with their ability as shown by the Otis Intelligence Tests. Frequently pupils standing high in intelligence tests receive low marks in composition—perhaps because of insubordination. The final paper, on "Setting up School Standards," by Mr. C. E. Douglas, assistant superintendent of schools

in Erie, Pennsylvania, brought forcibly to attention the danger of treating all the pupils of a class as of equal ability. At the beginning of any term under the best system of grading now possible there will be a wide range in the ability of the pupils. To set up a single unvarying standard for such pupils is, of course, absurd. He suggested the possibility of credit for actual achievement. By applying objective measurements it will be possible to a degree to tell how far each pupil has advanced from the starting-point. In this way credit can be given to the slow and plodding pupil, who has really made great improvement, as opposed to the brilliant pupil, who can always do well but does very little better at the close of the term than at the beginning. In a word, Mr. Douglas suggested the possibility of relative as opposed to absolute standards of attainment.

It was a matter of regret that Principal R. L. Sandwick, of the Deerfield-Shields High School, Highland Park, Illinois, could not be present to read his paper on "Improving Technique in English Composition." The teachers of his school have worked out a number of concrete and effective methods by which the technique of English composition can be made a matter of genuine interest to the pupils themselves. This paper, however, will appear in the *English Journal*.

The meeting as a whole served to illustrate clearly how far teachers of English have advanced in their thinking and practice in the last decade. The expression, "college entrance requirements," was scarcely used throughout the day. The speakers thought and spoke in terms of actual classroom activities. The new emphasis on oral as contrasted with written English and on the setting up of definite standards and scales indicates clearly the present trend.

DEMOCRATIZING DRAMATICS

An entirely different cast in each of the four acts was the record established in the presentation of *An American Citizen* on February 7 by the Junior class of the Tulsa High School. Forty-three students took part in the production.

This new plan democratizes dramatics. It removes the barrier which formerly shut out from rôles in school plays all except the handful of individuals endowed with outstanding histrionic ability. It involves try-outs in which almost every student takes part, and often brings to light talents which have lain dormant, their existence unknown even to the possessor.

An American Citizen is the second play successfully presented to Tulsa audiences by this method. In December the Freshman English classes staged Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, eighty-three students taking part. The dramatization was made by the students themselves.

Both of the plays were very well given, attaining fully as high standards as previous productions in which one cast presented an entire play. No especial strain was placed upon any particular instructor, for each act was under the direction of a different coach.

A significant feature of the training was the encouragement given students to work out their own interpretations rather than to imitate an instructor. The varying interpretations were harmonized in a week of final rehearsals, during which each cast saw the other casts present their respective acts.

This co-operative method of staging plays was worked out by Ward H. Green, head of the English department in Tulsa High School. It represents part of an extensive program inaugurated by Principal Merle C. Prunty and having as its objective the democratization of all school activities.

TEACHERS FOR THE PHILIPPINES

The United States Civil Service Commission states that a number of teachers are needed for duty in the high schools in the Philippine Islands. It has announced competitive examinations which are open to both men and women. The examination does not require the applicants to assemble for written tests, but ratings will be based upon the elements of education, training, and experience, and upon physical ability, as shown by the application and corroborative evidence. The opportunity for travel offered by these positions should be attractive.

Further information and application blanks may be obtained from the secretary of the United States civil service board at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Paul, St. Louis, Orleans, Seattle, or San Francisco, or from the United States Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C.

TO CELEBRATE OR NOT TO CELEBRATE

At a recent conference of club women and teachers from various places which celebrated American Speech Week in November, 1919, the question was raised, Shall there be in 1920 a second celebration? A

decided difference of opinion appeared at once. Some of those present felt that the first interest in the drive cannot be revived and that stress should now be laid on the organization of various forms of follow-up work in individual schools and clubs. Others felt that we have only begun; our first experience has but taught us how to set to work and a second celebration could be made vastly more effective. It is pointed out, moreover, that a number of groups did not begin to plan in time and hence did not actually celebrate at all. Such groups presumably would be glad to have an opportunity another year.

In order that data may be available upon which the American Speech Committee may base a judgment, the *English Journal* invites its readers to send in their opinions as to whether a second National Speech Week should be arranged for November of the present year. If so, should it follow the lines of the celebration of 1919 or take on some new form? If those who read this news item and who have definite opinions one way or another will take the trouble to drop a line to the Editor of the *English Journal* stating those views, the data thus collected will be tabulated and reported in due time.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

The *Bulletin* of the University of Utah for August, 1919, is devoted to a report on "The Conditions and Needs of Secondary School Libraries in Utah," by M. W. Poulson. The material presented is of general interest.—The Bureau of Educational Research of the University of Illinois has issued its first annual report as *University of Illinois Bulletin*, Vol. 17, No. 9, price twenty-five cents. This report contains a full account of the work of the Bureau, together with an annotated and classified list of standard tests which the Bureau has for sale. This is now the best place in the country at which to obtain the standardized educational tests.—"Oral English" is the title of a valuable pamphlet issued by the University of the State of New York as *Bulletin No. 691*, under date of August 1, 1919. Address Albany, New York.—Recent bulletins of the United States Bureau of Education are as follows: "Publications Available December 1919," "Library Activities, 1916-1918," "Educational Directory, 1919-20," Parts 3, 5, 6, and 7, "Educational Conditions in Japan," "The Public School System of Memphis, Tennessee," Parts 4 and 6, "Business Education in Secondary Schools," "Commercial Engineering," "Report of the Commissioner of Education for the year ended June 30, 1919."—A few suggestions on language work will be

found in a bulletin of the United States Bureau of Agriculture entitled "How Teachers May Use Farmers' Bulletin 602, Clean Milk."—The *University of Virginia Record* for November, 1919, contains a full account of the Rural Life Conference held at the university last July.

THE PERIODICALS

"THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH"

The remarkable growth of departments of educational research in the larger school systems during the past few years is evidenced by the appearance on January 1 of a new magazine devoted to their interests. The chief editor is Professor B. R. Buckingham, of the University of Illinois, who will be assisted by seven specialists, each in charge of a particular department. The contributions which have appeared in the two numbers of the magazine so far issued come primarily from professors of education in the universities. In the nature of the case most of the articles are more or less technical, though intended for general reading. Perhaps the most suggestive of immediate application is an article on a new kind of school examination by Dr. W. A. McCall, of Teachers College, Columbia University. He explains in detail the advantages and procedure of the "true or false" examination as developed by Professor E. L. Thorndike in his study of engineering education. The essence of the plan consists in arranging a series of twenty or more statements to be marked either true or false by the person examined. As one could guess the answers right half the time, incorrect scores are weighted. For example, if there are twenty statements, instead of cutting off five for each one marked wrong, ten is subtracted. As a means of determining the exact information acquired in a course this type of examination will be found both accurate and economical. Other articles in the new journal deal with standards of improvement in school subjects, the use of informal tests of reading accomplishment, and similar topics. To anyone who wishes to keep in touch with the more recent scientific work in the field of education the new journal will prove invaluable. It is issued by the Public School Publishing Company, of Bloomington, Illinois.

IMPRESSIONS OF LORD DUNSANY

Among the good things in the *Bookman* for February may be singled out for special mention Clayton Hamilton's "Personal Impressions of Lord Dunsany." The article opens with an account of a conversation

with the Irish peer after he had witnessed a production of two of his plays on the Lower East Side of New York. He found that a play on the stage is a very different thing from a play in manuscript, *The Queen's Enemies* turning out to be less dramatic than *A Night at an Inn*, although the idea in the latter is rather ordinary. Dunsany's methods of composition are interesting. Once a start is made—and anything may happen to be the starting-point—he rushes forward while the mood is on. *The Gods of the Mountain*, for example, was written in three sessions and *A Night at an Inn* at a single sitting between tea and dinner. The author declares he does not always know exactly where he is coming out, though he works better when he does. Writing plays is the thing he most dearly loves, though he found his experience in the army thoroughly interesting. The main outcome of that experience was his realization of the comparative unimportance of the immediate actual and the insistence of the perennial real. Lord Dunsany is much gratified to be appreciated during his lifetime and feels that this is but due to poets.

INDIVIDUAL READING ABILITY

An investigation into the measurement of individual reading ability with special reference to exceptional children, has been made by Miss Maud A. Merrell, research assistant in the Minnesota School for Feeble-Minded at Faribault, Minnesota. In the course of a study of the ability of subnormal children in the three R's Miss Merrell prepared a special reading scale for use with individual children. She gave special attention to the problem of typography and found that Century Oldstyle best served her purpose. She was able to determine the rate and comprehension of each child and the increase in speed from grade to grade. She concludes that both speed and comprehension in reading are conditioned to an important extent by the legibility of face of the printing type used. So far as the present investigation is concerned Century Oldstyle type seems to fulfil the requirements most perfectly for the various school grades from the first to the sixth inclusive. She thinks her scale likely to be of value for use in determining individual ability in connection with a general mental examination. The article, which appears in the *Journal of Educational Psychology* for October, 1919, concludes with an excellent bibliography.

"THE DRAMA"

The magazine called *The Drama*, now published as a monthly review, is appealing to a much wider and more popular audience than its predecessor, the *Quarterly*. The issue of December, 1919, for example,

contains among other articles "A Producers' Preface on *Twelfth Night*," by H. Granville Barker; "*Miriam* at the Berkeley Theater," by Frederick McConnell; "John Drinkwater and Abraham Lincoln," by Jack R. Crawford; and "The Work of the Actors' Fund," by Daniel Frohman. A short play called *The Melon Thief*, a medieval Japanese farce, is presented, together with numerous items of news and illustrations of recent scenes in drama and opera.

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

All who are interested in following the progress of the junior high school movement will be interested in a series of articles from the pen of R. L. Lyman appearing in the *School Review*. The latest, that in the March number, is devoted to an account of the Washington Junior High School in Rochester, New York. Rochester has advanced probably as far as any city in the country in this unit of the school system. Mr. Lyman describes in detail his impressions of a visit to the school. He reproduces the curriculum and comments on eliminations, the life-contacts provided, correlation of subject-matter, progress in difficulty of subject-matter, and cross-over privileges. Vocational instruction and vocational guidance, he tells us, are both emphasized in this school, there being a complete office-staff organization to care for these interests. There is also an interesting study-coach organization, and a complete democratic organization of the student body as a whole. The article is illustrated with diagrams and is on the whole an admirable account of a very significant educational experiment in training for democracy by making a democracy of the school.